

and we are this year as well. We're grateful for our beautiful land. We're grateful for a harvest big enough to feed us all, plus much of the world. We're grateful for our freedom. We're grateful for our families, and we're grateful for life itself.

So on Thanksgiving Day, we gather with loved ones and we lift our hearts toward heaven in humility and gratitude. As we count our blessings, Americans also share our blessings. We're a generous country. We're filled with caring citizens who reach out to others, people who've heard the universal call to love a neighbor as we want to be loved ourselves. On Thanksgiving and every day of the year, Americans live out of a spirit of compassion and care, and I thank you for that. It's the spirit that moves men and women to be mentors to the young, to be scout leaders, to be helpers of the elderly, to be comforters of the lonely and those who are left out.

We love our country, and the greatest example of that devotion is the citizen who steps forward to defend our Nation from harm. The members of our military have set aside their own comfort and convenience and safety to protect the rest of us. Their courage keeps us free. Their sacrifice makes us grateful, and their character makes us proud. Especially during the holi-

days, our whole Nation keeps them and their families in our thoughts and prayers.

And now to the ceremonial task of the day. Why don't we have a look at Flyer? There you go. I think Flyer heard Barney barking over there. [*Laughter*] It's a fine looking bird, isn't it? Flyer is probably wondering where he's going to wind up tomorrow. He's probably thinking he's going to end up on somebody's table. Well, I'm happy to report that he and Fryer both have many tomorrows ahead of them. This morning I am grateful I am granting a full Presidential pardon so they can live out their lives as safe as can be.

In fact, it gets even better. Later today Flyer and Fryer will be on a plane to Disneyland—[*laughter*—where they're going to achieve further celebrity as the honorary grand marshal of the Thanksgiving Day Parade.

Thank you all for coming. God bless, and happy Thanksgiving.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:22 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Mike Briggs, chairman, and Alice L. Johnson, president, National Turkey Federation. The Thanksgiving Day proclamation of November 16 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

The President's Radio Address *November 25, 2006*

Good morning. This week, Americans across our Nation gather with loved ones to give thanks for the many blessings we share. We're grateful for our friends and families, who fill our lives with meaning and purpose. We're grateful to live in a land of plenty and during a time of great prosperity. And we're grateful to Almighty God for the freedom to enjoy all these gifts.

Every Thanksgiving we remember the story of the Pilgrims who came to America in search of a better life and religious freedom. Much has changed in the four centuries since these humble settlers landed at Plymouth Rock. While they were only a shivering few, we are now a strong and growing nation of more than 300 million. And the desire for freedom that led the Pilgrims to the New World still guides our Nation today.

Americans believe that every person has the right to live, work, and worship in freedom. And we're thankful to the men and women of our Nation's Armed Forces who risk their lives to protect those rights. This Thanksgiving, we are mindful that many of our finest citizens are spending the holiday far from their homes and loved ones, and we know that their service makes it possible for us to live in freedom.

On Tuesday, I had the chance to visit our troops and their families at Hickam Air Force Base in Honolulu, Hawaii. Our servicemembers there have deployed around the world to fight the terrorists in Afghanistan and Iraq, conduct important maritime exercises in the Pacific, help deliver humanitarian aid to the victims of disaster, and fight drug trafficking. I told the men and women at the base that we're grateful for their bravery and service and that we will never forget those who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

One American who made the ultimate sacrifice was Marine Corporal Jason Dunham. Two-and-a-half years ago in Iraq, Corporal Dunham gave his life when he threw himself on top of an enemy grenade and absorbed the blast. His selfless act saved the lives of two of his fellow marines, and earlier this month, I announced that our Nation will recognize Corporal Dunham with our highest decoration for valor, the Medal of Honor.

Corporal Dunham's friends remember him as the kind of guy who would do anything for you, his superiors remember him as a model marine, and a grateful Nation

will forever remember him as one of America's most valiant heroes. This Thanksgiving, our thoughts and prayers are with his family and with all military families, especially those mourning the loss of a loved one.

During this holiday season, we also think of those still working to recover from the devastating hurricanes that struck our Nation last year. We are grateful to the armies of compassion who rallied to bring food, water, and hope to those who had lost everything, and we renew our commitment to help those who are still suffering and to rebuild our Nation's gulf coast.

Thanksgiving reminds us that the true strength of our Nation is the compassion and decency of our people. And as we count our blessings, we remember that those blessings are meant to be shared. I encourage all Americans to look for a way to help those in need—from tutoring a child to working in a shelter to giving a hand to a neighbor. I thank all those Americans who volunteer this season, and Laura and I wish every American a safe and happy holiday.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 11:20 a.m. on November 22 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on November 25. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 24 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement on the Deaths of Frank Madla, Mary Cruz, and Aleena Jimenez *November 26, 2006*

Laura and I are deeply saddened by the deaths of Frank Madla, his mother-in-law, Mary Cruz, and his granddaughter, Aleena Jimenez. Frank was a dedicated public

servant who devoted more than three decades of his life to serving his State and all its people in the Texas house and senate. Frank never hesitated to reach across